

Land Acquisition Guide – Companion Checklist

This **Land Acquisition Guide for Natural Burial Cemeteries – Companion Checklist** is based on the steps and requirements outlined in the *Land Acquisition Guide* so a user can understand the relevancy, importance and applicability of each section of the guide.

1. Land Ownership – Identify Type of Natural Burial Cemetery Ownership

- ☐ Identify entity type (Municipality, Land Trust, Conservation Easement Owner, Non-Profit Natural Cemetery, Private Family Cemetery).
 - ☐ Verify NH requirements for cemetery ownership and operation for your entity type.
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2. Researching the Property

Preliminary Property Research of **The Real Estate** through free publicly available sources.

- ☐ Conduct an internet search of the property address for MLS listings, past sales, news articles, or public records.
- ☐ Check municipal website for GIS Maps and Planning Board minutes that can often provide detailed site-specific information including:
 - Metes and bounds
 - Zoning district
 - Property tax card & assessment
 - Past transfers of ownership
 - Planning Board Decisions
 - Easements
 - Flood zones
 - Topography
 - Soils
 - Sewer/water systems
 - Historic site designation
- ☐ Check other internet resources, such as:
 - NHGranitView
 - USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service – NH

Next Levels of **Real Estate** Research

- ☐ Find ways to find accurate Metes and Bounds of property.
- ☐ Determine importance of municipality's Zoning District and Zoning Ordinance as they pertain to cemetery use.
- ☐ Find details gained from the property's Tax Card.
- ☐ Gather information concerning the property's Tax Assessment.
- ☐ Determine importance of research on all recorded documents that reference the property.
- ☐ Determine necessity of eventual Title Search and Title Insurance.
- ☐ See what might be discovered with review of the municipality's file on the property.
- ☐ See what is meant by the Bundle of Rights and how it pertains to the property.
- ☐ Understand FEMA Flood Zones and how they pertain to the property.
- ☐ Locate publicly available topographical information.
- ☐ Locate publicly available site-specific NH DES known environmental impacts.
- ☐ Locate publicly available soils information for soil type, permeability, slope, and depth prior to Geotechnical survey.
- ☐ Find location of public sewer and water systems.
- ☐ Locate possible "Historic Site" information on the property.

3. Attributes of the Land itself to determine Suitability for Natural Burial – Next Steps

- ☐ Define Deed Restrictions
 - ☐ Research information concerning existing versus proposed conservation easements and components of such easements.
 - ☐ Determine if property is in Current Use; assess implications for removal and possible Land Use Change Tax.
 - ☐ Find information on municipal cemetery deeds.
- ☐ Conduct a Land Survey — Why the need for, and what to expect when you obtain, a current, recorded land survey by licensed engineer.

- ☐ Consider a Geotechnical Engineering Survey — Why the need for, and what to expect when you obtain, a Geotechnical Engineering Survey by licensed engineer when seeking granting authority approvals for natural burial cemetery use.
 - ☐ Research further information concerning ideal soil conditions for natural burial cemetery use in context of anticipated rates of body decomposition.
 - ☐ Determine the necessity of acquiring water quality protection information.
 - ☐ Identify areas with ideal burial conditions on the property.
 - ☐ Determine carrying capacity of land for cemetery use.
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4. Other Consideration for Acquiring Land for Cemetery Use

- ☐ Consider contingencies when making an offer to purchase land.
- ☐ Create a plat map of the land for use as a cemetery.
- ☐ Ensure compliance with all setbacks and limits for cemetery use.
- ☐ Obtain written consent from abutters.
- ☐ Identify other stakeholders.
- ☐ Determine necessity of a right-of-way to private burial grounds.
- ☐ Map social and cultural resources within the property.
- ☐ Design parking and traffic patterns.
- ☐ Research additional permitting considerations for cemetery use and burial events.